

**“What needs to be done within the UN System in order to provide an enabling environment for youth led multi stakeholder action and innovative resource mobilization in the context of the post 2015 agenda.”**

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By Ras Mubarak, CEO of National Youth Authority of Ghana (NYA)

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, I bring you greetings from my homeland Ghana, and with warm regards to everyone who joined our Continent Africa to celebrate her recent Africa Union day.

I am here today as a representative of the youth and people of Ghana to join in the global effort to contribute ideas to the global consensus of making the lives of our respective citizens better by working with the UN to establish a practical, future developmental framework for all relevant stakeholders.

We cannot emphasize enough the power of the youth’s involvement in any form of transformational planning or development agenda. This is true partly because the youth represents the future of our respective economies and whatever progress that we seek to achieve. On the other hand, the growing population is equipped with the energies and newer methods that are key for a practical approach on embarking on development agenda globally.

A key observation by UNDP-Ghana in its 2012 report on Ghana’s progress towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals was that, although Ghana’s economic growth performance has been touted as one of the best in the Sub-Saharan Africa region particularly, the challenge remains about how to translate such impressive growth performance into the generation of productive and decent employment and eradication of income inequality. This statement is particularly true of the state of vast numbers of youth of Ghana. Our government continues to contribute significant amounts of public resources towards youth entrepreneurial training, and by so doing, created special funds and youth enterprise models which are laying the foundations for mass youth employment and skill development take-off.

I stress the point of investing in our youth because a theme as important as creating an enabling environment for youth-led multi stakeholder action and innovative resource mobilization in the context of the post 2015 agenda, is hinged on the capacity of the youth to contribute meaningfully to resource mobilization efforts for a sustainable development agenda. The shortcomings of the global market economy make it even more imperative that more innovative approaches to financing sustainable development goals be found.

In this regard I could not agree more with **Inge Kaul and Pedro Conceição** in their scholarly work - **The New Public Finance- Responding to Global Challenges, 2006**, which corrected observes that “public finance is in transition. For the most part, the world still practices what might be termed conventional public finance—paying to achieve public policy purposes mainly from public revenue, now and in full. And we know that this way of meeting public policy goals often leaves many goals underfunded—something seen most acutely today in the Millennium Development Goals. New policy approaches and financing technologies are emerging that could allow us to pursue public policy goals more efficiently at lower cost and with higher welfare gains. Often involving public-private partnering that builds on the comparative strengths of all partners, these new approaches and tools permit better risk management (avoiding costly crises), more sustainable resource management (avoiding further loss of resources), a better understanding of incentives (motivating actors to abide by agreements and follow rules), and better ways of harnessing private finance and initiative (meeting challenges that would otherwise remain unmet or underfunded”.

The UN records show that aid commitments from 1970, reaffirmed by donors at numerous summits and conferences since then, are not being met. Aid resources reached 0.32 per cent of the gross national income (GNI) of Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members in 2010, well short of the UN target of 0.7 per cent of GNI.

I will propose that a first step towards meeting this objective will be to create partnerships with youth groups to harness their energies towards voluntary initiatives in programs which would otherwise have involved substantial expenditure of funds to meet manpower needs.

In my home country Ghana, the National Youth Authority which I head has successfully deployed critically needed programs and services to vast and remotely populated regions of the country through youth activism and volunteerism. I speak of this in the scenario of a small West African State called Ghana, but the principle herein is worth considering for application on a global stage as an alternative to direct global capital deployment.

Social media platforms have become the global converging points for vast youth populations across the world. “App” developers are increasingly youthful and more inclined to offer technological solutions to a global audience. These innovative communication tools have not only succeed in mobilizing vast youth demographics and drawing consumer patterns, but have also created wealth for young entrepreneurs through their usage. I would propose that the UN and its agencies give some attention to building partnerships in this regard and leveraging these tools in ways which tap into the vast resource-generating potentials they present.

I must acknowledge the efforts of this honourable gathering in putting in efforts in making more relatable, the Post 2015 Agenda (including climate change) set by the

United Nations. It is heart-warming to learn that even after 70 years of existence; the UN has not lost sight of the steps needed in bettering the lives of citizens globally. Let us also not forget the input of IAAI/ GloCha and their willingness to partner with UN in order to employ the relevant actors to make this goal, a reality.

It is necessary that we make we make youth-friendly, the agenda that is being pushed. I believe it is along these same lines that the IAAI proposed the Global Challenges Youth Music Contest, which is an excellent way to make these goals and agendas readily relatable to the youth. The power of music transcends all geographical and language barriers – and also serves as a medium for the youth to express their sentiments on societal issues and injustices. In this context especially, the use of music will undoubtedly bridge the gap between the global youth and the seemingly complex systems of the United Nations.

It will also be important to consider funding and training programs in a way of sensitizing and encouraging the youth to start and grow their own businesses. Besides providing a livelihood for themselves, this creates employment opportunities for other members of the population and subsequently alleviates the poverty problem that currently affects developing nations. I strongly believe that this is in line with the High Level Panel Report brought out on May 30, 2014 to eradicate extreme poverty on the face of this earth by year 2030.

**Ashish Thakkar, CEO and Founder of the Mara Group in Uganda** hit the nail right on the head when he emphasized that young Africans are in dire need of entrepreneurial advice in order to provide the requisite building blocks for transformation of their economies.

It is all for good that we initiate effort to stimulate the interest of the youth and create an enabling environment for them to bring on board their expertise – at that stage, resource mobilization will become much more feasible. Let us work hand in hand to put the power of achieving this agenda in the hands of our youth.

American Educational Reform Leader, **Deborah Meier**, put it best when she said, "There's a radical – and wonderful – new idea here... that [the youth] could and should be inventors of their own theories, critics of other people's ideas, analyzers of evidence, and makers of their own personal marks on the world. It is an idea with revolutionary implications - If we take it seriously."

I thank you all for the honour done me and the youth of Ghana to present these humble views.

Thank you